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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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Daniel C. Conrad

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EXAMINER

BLAN, NICOLE R

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1792

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

05/14/2008

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/709,675	Applicant(s) CONRAD ET AL.	
	Examiner NICOLE BLAN	Art Unit 1792	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 February 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 2-5, 7-13, 16-20 and 22-31 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 2-5, 7-13, 16-20 and 22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. The amendments filed on February 19, 2008 to claims 2-3, 5, 7, 11, 16-18, and 30-31 as well as the cancellation of claims 6 and 14-15 have been acknowledged.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments filed February 19, 2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In response to applicant's arguments regarding Bader '998 as non-analogous art, the Examiner respectfully disagrees. Bader '998 is reasonably pertinent to a particular problem with which the inventor was concerned, namely shock absorbing boots adaptable to fit onto devices. Bader '998 and the instant application are the same in function of shock absorption; therefore, the structure of one can be substituted for the other. Thus, Bader '998 is analogous art and satisfies the requirement for use as prior art.

In response to applicant's arguments regarding Healy '405 as non-analogous art, the Examiner respectfully disagrees. Healy '405 is reasonably pertinent to a particular problem with which the inventor was concerned, namely it isolates force and prevents slipping. Healy '405 and the instant application are the same in function of isolating force; therefore, the structure of one can be substituted for the other. Thus, Healy '405 is analogous art and satisfies the requirement for use as prior art.

In response to applicant's arguments regarding the use of Official Notice, the Examiner does not find them persuasive. As discussed in the prior office action from November 16, 2007, the Examiner states "Applicant has not timely challenged the official notice, and therefore noticed fact is taken as admitted prior art. ... See MPEP 2144.03 C." Furthermore, the applicant's have merely stated that the Examiner is incorrect but have not pointed to why the statements used by the Examiner are not true. The washing machine has a range of motion and the references teach the used of a boot; therefore the boot inherently has an operation condition. There is no relationship required by claim 2.

3. Applicant's arguments with respect to Pool '986 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection based on the newly added limitations to the independent claims. Thus, applicant's arguments with respect to the combination of Moore '944, Pool '986, and Bader '998 in claims 30-31 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection based on the newly added limitations to the independent claims. Furthermore, the rejection of claims 2-20 and 22-29 that depended from claims 30-31 is moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

4. Applicant's arguments, see bottom of page 14 to the top of page 15, filed February 19, 2008, with respect to the rejection(s) of claim(s) 30-31 have been fully considered and are persuasive in view of the amendments made to the claims. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made. A detailed discussion of the new rejection can be found below.

Claim Objections

5. Claim 5 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form. Claim 5 discloses a snubber spaced above the floor when the boot is in the natural state and compressed against the floor when the boot is in the collapsed state. Claim 30 teaches a snubber out of contact with the floor in an isolating condition and in contact with the floor in a non-isolating condition. How does the phrase natural/compressed state define over isolating/non-isolating conditions?

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

8. Claims 30, 2, 4-5, 7, 31, 19, 22-23, and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Moore (U.S. Patent 2,767,944, hereinafter '944), in view of Bader (U.S. Patent 6,055,998, hereinafter '998), and further in view of Healy (U.S. PGPub 2005/0081405, hereinafter '405).

Claims 30-31, 4-5, 7: '944 teaches a household clothes washer [also referred to as a household appliance] [col. 1, lines 15-17] for use in a home environment having a floor [inherent trait of an appliance for use in a house] for supporting the household clothes washer [or appliance] comprising: a cabinet [(1), Fig. 1, col. 2, lines 47-48]; a wash basket [(6), Fig. 1, col. 2, lines 26-31] mounted within the cabinet for rotational motion [col. 2, lines 31-36] [the wash basket corresponds to a vibration generator located within the cabinet]; a foot [(15), Fig. 1, col. 2, lines 63-64] extending from the cabinet for supporting the cabinet on the floor; and a boot mounted to the foot [(23), Fig. 1, col. 3, lines 1-3]. '944 also teaches that the boot is made from an elastomeric material [col. 3, lines 13-44].

'944 does not teach an upper defining a foot recess in which the foot is removably received to couple the boot to the foot, a sole in contact with the floor in isolating and non-isolating conditions, a snubber in contact with the floor in non-isolating conditions and out of contact with the floor in isolating condition, and a the boot is deformable. However, '998 teaches a solid-body boot [refer to Fig. 1 below, reference number 26] and that a foot is capable of being removed from the boot [col. 1, lines 43-54]. '998 also teaches a sole configured to be in contact with the floor [see Fig. 1 below as well as Figs. 3-5 in the prior art] and that the boot is deformable [see Fig. 5 in the prior art]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have used the removable boot of '998 as the

Art Unit: 1792

particular boot of '944 with a reasonable expectation of success because '998 teaches that it is important to offer the shock absorbing fixtures that are adaptable to fit on devices that were previously purchased.

'944 and '998 do not teach a snubber in contact with the floor in non-isolating conditions and out of contact with the floor in isolating condition, and that a boot is deformable between a first physical shape when the snubber is out of contact with the floor and a second physical shape when the snubber is in contact with the floor. However, 405 teaches a sole [abstract] with a snubber [lug, pg. 2, paragraph 28, lines 1-3] [(31), Figs. 3A and 3B, pg. 3, paragraph 38, lines 3-5] out of contact with the floor [Fig. 3A, pg. 2, paragraph 27, lines 4-7] and in contact with the floor [Fig. 3B, pg. 2, paragraph 27, lines 7-13 and pg. 3, paragraph 38, lines 5-14] so as to isolate the force created to prevent walking [slipping, pg. 3, paragraph 38, lines 11-14]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of isolating forces that the sole as taught by '405 could be used as the sole of '998 with a reasonable expectation of success because '405 teaches that it isolates force and prevents slipping. This also reads on claim 7.

The modified boot of '998 and '405 teaches that the boot is deformable such that the snubber moves relative to the foot as the boot is deformed between a first physical shape corresponding to the isolating condition/natural state [reads on claim 4], where the snubber is out of contact with the floor [reads on "spaced above the floor" in claims 5 and 23] and the boot substantially isolates the floor from forces generated by the rotation of the basket and acting through the foot [Fig. 3A, pg. 2, paragraph 27, lines 4-7], and a second physical shape corresponding to the non-isolating condition/collapsed state [reads on claim 4], where the snubber is in contact with the floor [reads on "compressed against the floor" in claims 5 and 23]

Art Unit: 1792

and the boot substantially passes forces through the foot and into the floor [Fig. 3B, pg. 2, paragraph 27, lines 7-13 and pg. 3, paragraph 38, lines 5-14]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the modified boot combination of '998 and '405 as the boot of '944 with a reasonable expectation of success because '998 and '405 teach that shock absorbing fixtures are used to isolate forces.

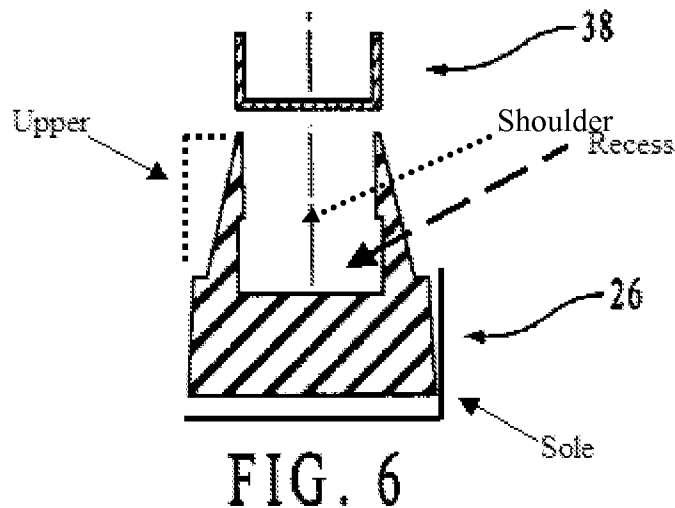


Fig. 1: Refer to claims 30-31 above

Claim 2: '944, '998, and '405 teach the limitation of claim 30 above. They do not explicitly teach the household clothes washer having a predetermined range of motion that defines the operational condition of the boot. The Examiner takes Official Notice that it is common knowledge to one of ordinary skill in the art of operating conditions for a washing machine that the basket would have a predetermined range of motion that is inherent to defining the operational conditions of the boot. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the

Art Unit: 1792

art that the predetermined range of motion would lead to defining the operational conditions of the washing machine.

Claim 19: '944, '998, and '405 teach the limitations of claim 30 above. '944 also teaches the household clothes washer according to claim 1, wherein the boot is made from a resilient material [col. 3, lines 13-14, 25-30, and 56-59].

Claim 22: '944, '998, and '405 teach the limitations of claim 31 above. '998 also teaches a boot [(26), Fig. 6, col. 3, lines 52-55] comprising a sole with a bottom surface for contacting the floor [see Fig. 6 below, the bottom portion of (26)], and an upper extending from the sole [see Fig. 6 below, the upper portion of (26)] and defining a foot recess [see Fig. 6 below, the inner portion of (26) is the recess] in which the foot [(38), Fig. 6] is received to mount the boot to the foot in order to isolate the forces generated by the appliance. Refer to Figure 2 below.

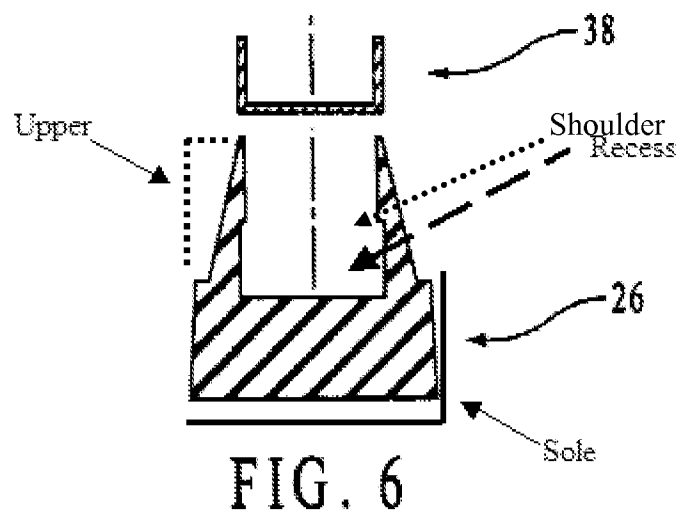


Figure 2: Refer to claim 22

Art Unit: 1792

Claim 28: '944, '998, and '405 teach the limitations of claim 22 above. They do not explicitly teach the household clothes washer having a predetermined range of motion that defines the operational condition of the boot. The Examiner takes Official Notice that it is common knowledge to one of ordinary skill in the art of operating conditions for a washing machine that the basket would have a predetermined range of motion that is inherent to defining the operational conditions of the boot. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that the predetermined range of motion would lead to defining the operational conditions of the washing machine.

9. Claims 3 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over '944, '998, and '405, and further in view of Johnson (U.S. Patent 6,141,995, hereafter '995).

Claims 3 and 29: '944, '998, and '405 teach the limitations of claims 2 and 28 above, respectively. They do not teach a washing machine wherein the boot is in the non-isolating condition when the magnitude of the forces acting on the washer as the basket rotates about a horizontal axis is such that the top of the cabinet moves through an arc no greater than 2 inches. However, '995 teaches that by making mounts or bases for a machine to sit on from a resilient material, such as, plastic [col. 3, lines 14-17], it will be flexible enough to move from the force acting on the machine, but it also able to restrict the motion because the material will dampen the force [col. 4, lines 13-25]. It is such that resilient material of '995 allows the modified boot of '998 to operate in a non-isolating and dampening condition when the magnitude of force increases; thus, minimizing movement through the cabinet. The Examiner takes Official Notice that washing machines installed in small spaces should minimize any movement to avoid

damage to surrounding parts. Therefore, it would be rendered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that mounting an oscillating machine on a flexible mount would limit the movement of the case by dampening the forces.

10. Claims 8-10, 16, and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over ‘944, ‘998, and ‘405, and further in view of Johnson (U.S. Patent 3,601,345, hereafter ‘345).

Claim 8: ‘944, ‘998, and ‘405 teach the limitations of claim 7 above. They do not teach a stiffener in the sole. However, ‘345 teaches a stiffener [(14 and 15), Fig. 5] in the sole [(11), Fig. 5] [col. 2, lines 26-40] in order to provide the correct strength to the boot in order to dissipate the vibrations caused by the machine. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of isolating force that the stiffener as taught by ‘345 could be used as the stiffener in ‘998 since, ‘345 teaches that it isolates force by providing the correct strength.

Claim 9: ‘944, ‘998, ‘405, and ‘345 teach the limitations of claim 8 above. They do not teach a stiffener that circumscribes the snubber recess. However, ‘345 teaches a stiffener [(14 and 15), Fig. 5] that circumscribes the recess [area below the rivet (19) in Fig. 4, col. 2, lines 63-70] to act as a vibration insulator [col. 2, line 56-58]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of isolating force that the stiffener as taught by ‘345 circumscribing the recess could be used as the stiffener in ‘998 since, ‘345 teaches that by circumscribing the recess it isolates the vibrations.

Art Unit: 1792

Claim 10: '944, '998, '405, and '345 teach the limitations of claim 8 above. '998 also teaches a washer according to claim 9, wherein the upper [see Fig. 3 below, the upper portion of (26)] terminates in a resilient shoulder [see Fig. 6 below] defining a mouth [see Fig. 6 below] for the foot recess [see Fig. 6 below, the inner portion of (26) is the recess], with the mouth having a portion smaller than the foot such that when the foot passes through the mouth, the resilient shoulder is initially deflected and when the foot is received in the recess, the resilient shoulder overlies a portion of the foot to aid in mounting the boot to the foot. See Figure below. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of isolating force that the boot as taught by '998 could be used as the boot of '944 since, '998 teaches that it is a shock absorbing fixture.

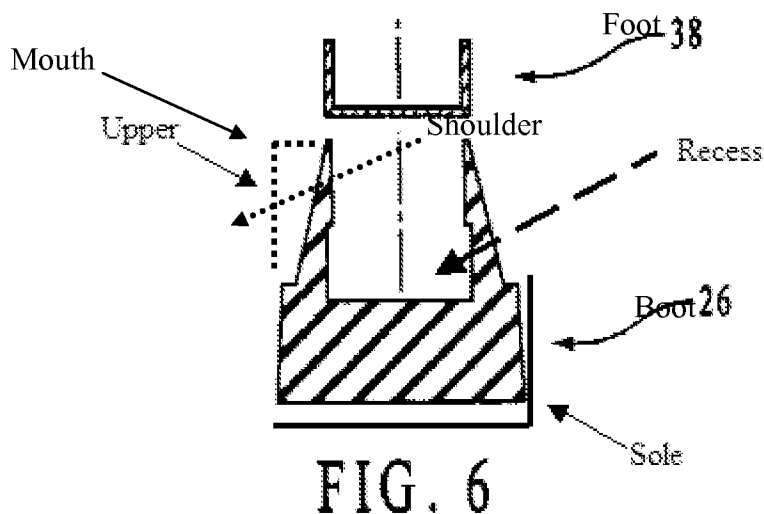


Figure 3: Refer to claim 10

Claims 16 and 24: '944, '998, and '405 teach the limitations of claims 30 and 22 above, respectively. They do not teach a stiffener in the sole. However, '345 teaches a stiffener [(14

Art Unit: 1792

and 15), Fig. 5] in the sole [(11), Fig. 5] [col. 2, lines 26-40] in order to provide the correct strength to the boot in order to dissipate the vibrations caused by the machine. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of isolating force that the stiffener as taught by '345 could be used as the stiffener in '998 since, '345 teaches that it isolates force by providing the correct strength.

11. Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over '944, '998, '405, and '345 as applied to claim 10 above, and further in view of Midcap (U.S. Patent 5,713,382, hereafter '382).

Claim 11: '944, '998, '405, and '345 teach the limitations of claim 10 above. They do not teach a retaining element for retaining the foot beneath the shoulder. However, '382 teaches a retaining element [(450), Fig. 4, col. 4, lines 44-54] for retaining the foot within the upper portion of the boot [(430), Fig. 4, col. 4, lines 44-46]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that the retaining element as taught by '382 could be used to retain the foot inside the boot of '998 with a reasonable expectation of success because '382 teaches that the foot is maintained in the boot.

12. Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over '944, '998, '405, '345, and '382 as applied to claim 11 above, and further in view of Levasseur (U.S. Patent 4,947,882, hereafter '882).

Claim 12: '944, '998, '405, '345, and '382 teach the limitations of claim 11 above. They do not teach using a split element that circumscribes the mouth as the retaining element.

Art Unit: 1792

However, '882 teaches a split retaining element [(13), Fig. 2, col. 2, lines 3-6] that circumscribes the mouth [col. 2, lines 66-68 and col. 3, lines 1-5] in order to retain the foot [(10), Fig. 2] inside the boot [(1), Fig. 2] [col. 2, lines 47-66]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that the retaining element as taught by '882 could be used to retain the foot inside the boot of '998 since, '882 teaches that the foot is maintained in the boot.

13. Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over '944, '998, '405, '345, '382, and '882 as applied to claim 12 above, and further in view of Greene et al. (U.S. Patent 6,131,593, hereafter '593).

Claim 13: '944, '998, '405, '345, '382, and '882 teach the limitations of claim 12 above. They do not teach a washing machine comprising a bearing plate positioned within the foot recess and supporting the foot relative to the boot when the foot is received within the foot recess. However, '593 teaches a bearing plate [(60), Fig. 7, col. 4, lines 12-16] positioned with the foot recess [(24), Fig. 7] that supports the foot [(14), Fig. 1] relative to the boot [(12), Fig. 7] when the foot is received within the foot recess in order to prevent damage to the boot from the foot. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that the bearing plate as taught by '593 could be used to support the foot inside the boot of '998 since, '593 teaches that a bearing plate is used to prevent damage to the boot from the foot.

14. Claims 17 and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over ‘944, ‘998, and ‘405, and further in view of ‘382.

Claims 17 and 25: ‘944, ‘998, and ‘405 teach the limitations of claims 30 and 22 above, respectively. They do not teach a retaining element for retaining the foot beneath the shoulder. However, ‘382 teaches a retaining element [(450), Fig. 4, col. 4, lines 44-54] for retaining the foot within the upper portion of the boot [(430), Fig. 4, col. 4, lines 44-46]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that the retaining element as taught by ‘382 could be used to retain the foot inside the boot of ‘998 with a reasonable expectation of success because ‘382 teaches that the foot is maintained in the boot.

15. Claims 18 and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over ‘944, ‘998, and ‘405, and further in view of ‘593.

Claims 18 and 27: ‘944, ‘998, and ‘405 teach the limitations of claim 30 and 22 above, respectively. They do not teach a washing machine comprising a bearing plate positioned within the foot recess and supporting the foot relative to the boot when the foot is received within the foot recess. However, ‘593 teaches a bearing plate [(60), Fig. 7, col. 4, lines 12-16] positioned with the foot recess [(24), Fig. 7] that supports the foot [(14), Fig. 1] relative to the boot [(12), Fig. 7] when the foot is received within the foot recess in order to prevent damage to the boot from the foot. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that the bearing plate as taught by ‘593 could be used to support the foot inside the boot of ‘998 with a reasonable expectation of success because ‘593 teaches that a bearing plate is used to prevent damage to the boot from the foot.

16. Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over ‘944, ‘998, and ‘405 as applied to claim 19 above, and further in view of Obata et al. (U.S. Patent 5,029,458, hereafter ‘458).

Claim 20: ‘944, ‘998, and ‘405 teach the limitations of claim 19 above. They do not teach that the basket rotates about a horizontal axis. The Examiner takes Official Notice that it is common knowledge to one of ordinary skill in the art that a horizontal axis washer can be used in place of a vertical axis washer and that a damper would be needed to isolate the forces produced from both of the machines. See, for example, ‘458, that teaches a horizontal washer [abstract] yielding rubber legs [(1a), Fig. 1, col. 3, lines 63-65]. It is common knowledge to one of ordinary skill in the art that rubber is used to dampen vibrations, such as those produced from the rotating basket. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use a horizontal axis washer interchangeably with a vertical axis washer in order to dampen the vibrations from the baskets by utilizing rubber boots.

17. Claim 26 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over ‘944, ‘998, ‘405, and ‘382 as applied to claim 26 above, and further in view of ‘882.

Claim 26: ‘944, ‘998, and ‘382 teach the limitations of claim 25 above. They do not teach using a split element that circumscribes the mouth as the retaining element. However, ‘882 teaches a split retaining element [(13), Fig. 2, col. 2, lines 3-6] that circumscribes the mouth [col. 2, lines 66-68 and col. 3, lines 1-5] in order to retain the foot [(10), Fig. 2] inside the boot [(1), Fig. 2] [col. 2, lines 47-66]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that

Art Unit: 1792

the retaining element as taught by '882 could be used to retain the foot inside the boot of '998 since, '882 teaches that the foot is maintained in the boot.

Conclusion

18. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to NICOLE BLAN whose telephone number is (571)270-1838. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday 8-5 and alternating Fridays 8-4.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Cleveland can be reached on 571-272-1418. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 1792

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/N. B./

Examiner, Art Unit 1792

/Michael Cleveland/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1792